

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-5 are pending in the application and stand rejected.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C §103

Claims 1 and 3-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,077,109 to Prazoff. In particular, the Examiner finds that Prazoff discloses all claimed elements except for the end walls and side walls and plurality of retainer means, but opines that all these elements would have been obvious to the skilled person. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

With respect to the Examiner's assertion that the shape of the housing body would have been obvious to modify as warranted by practical use, Applicant respectfully notes that the Examiner has failed to set forth any such practical use that would influence the skilled person to discard Prazoff's elliptical housing and replace it with the two rectangular pieces taught by Applicant. Applicant further notes that the Prazoff reference is specifically discussed in the specification and it's main drawback over the present invention is outlined - namely, that the approach of Prazoff is to essentially add an elliptical surrounding wall (511) around a typical extension socket to receive the cord therein, thereby creating a bulkier and more costly to manufacture device. Applicant's approach, on the other hand, is to essentially reduce the size of the bottom half of a typical extension socket to receive the cord between the bottom and top half. This is the reason Applicant's device is no more costly to manufacture than a typical extension socket - because the main change is simply to make the bottom half smaller. Applicant further notes that Prazoff is very specific about the outer wall having an elliptical shape (*e.g.* col. 3 l. 60), and contains not one hint that the outer wall could be of any other shape.

The desire to provide a typical-sized extension socket is also the reason claim 1 specifies that the cord is received in the track in single file. The Examiner dismisses this limitation as being met by Prazoff simply by using a cord one-third the length of the one depicted in the figures. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this interpretation of Prazoff, because cutting Prazoff's cord to one-third would result in the cord being laid out across the bottom of Prazoff's

receiving track instead of a single file as claimed. Applicant's specification on page 4 teaches that the provision of a receiving track that is just wide enough to accommodate a single file of the extension cord helps restrain the movement of the extension cord. The Examiner will certainly appreciate that Prazoff's design places a lot of strain on the retainer means (54) because it is not only the sole retainer but it has to retain multiple turns of the wound cord. Allowing only one file of turns in the receiving track aids the job of the retainer means as well as makes it easier for the user to wind the cord therein.

The limitation of a single-file-wide receiving track further allows Applicant to utilize multiple retainer means. Prazoff's design, on the other hand, would be hampered by the addition of further retainers because Prazoff's retainers are by necessity much wider and thus the user would find it harder to wind the cord into the receiving track in a neat, orderly manner if forced to slip the cord past multiple such retainers. For this reason Applicant further respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that the skilled person looking to implement Prazoff's design would have thought to add a plurality of retainer means, as this would in fact detract from the usability of Prazoff's invention.

With respect to claim 3, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's interpretation is very clearly at odds with the plain teaching of Prazoff, which very unambiguously teaches that the retainer means (54) is an arm that is shown as having one and only one configuration - linear. There is nothing in Prazoff to support the Examiner's interpretation of this arm as being L-shaped when "taken as a whole" with the endless wall. The endless wall is a separately-claimed element from the retainer means and the Examiner's attempts to make the endless wall of Prazoff do double-duty as reading upon both the endless wall and the retainer means is improper under the Rules.

Applicant further respectfully disagrees that integrating retainer means with the socket body of Prazoff (as per claim 5) would have been obvious to the skilled person because, as discussed above, the much larger retainer means required by Prazoff do not easily lend themselves to casting integral with the supporting base (the endless wall) as the stress placed upon the joint between the retainer and the wall would dictate a very thick joint - Prazoff explicitly avoids this by using what appears to be a rivet that securely affixes the retainer to the

socket wall. Applicant thus submits that the skilled person would not in fact contemplate casting Prazoff's retainer integrally with the socket wall.

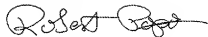
In summary, Applicant notes that his approach to solving the problem of excess cord entanglement is different from that of Prazoff and has resulted in a different device as detailed above. Applicant thus respectfully requests the Examiner to consider the totality of differences between the claimed device and that disclosed by Prazoff and the benefits conferred thereby, and to kindly pass all pending claims to issue.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 12-0415.

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Respectfully submitted,



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